

**Draft  
Environmental Assessment  
Old Harper's Bridge Acquisitions**



**June 2008**



***Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks***

# Environmental Assessment MEPA, NEPA, MCA 23-1-110 CHECKLIST

## PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of proposed state action:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to acquire 12.34 acres of land adjacent to the Clark Fork River approximately 8 miles northwest of Missoula. The property consists of two tracts of land. Tract 1 contains 3.91 acres, which will be a donation to FWP, and Tract 2 contains 8.43 acres, which will be purchased by FWP. FWP proposes to acquire both tracts in fee title.
2. **Agency authority for the proposed action:**  
FWP has the authority to develop outdoor recreational resources in the state per 23-2-101 MCA: *"for the purpose of conserving the scenic, historic, archaeologic, scientific, and recreational resources of the state and providing their use and enjoyment, thereby contributing to the cultural, recreational, and economic life of the people and their health."*
3. **Name of project:** Old Harper's Bridge Acquisitions
4. **Project sponsor:**  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
3201 Spurgin Road  
Missoula, MT 59804  
406-542-5500
5. **Estimated Schedule of Events:**  
Public Comment Period: June 2008  
Decision Notice Published: Early July 2008  
FWP Commission and Land Board Approval: July 2008
6. **Location:**  
Missoula County, T14N R21W Section 36



Tract 1 is immediately south of FWP's Deep Creek Fishing Access Site along the Clark Fork River and Tract 2 is across the river from Tract 1.



**7. Project size:**

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>10.34</u>
Residential	<u>0</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
(b) Open Space/	<u>2</u>	Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>
Woodlands/Recreation		Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian	<u>0</u>	Forestry	<u>0</u>
Areas		Rangeland	<u>0</u>
		Other	<u>0</u>

**8. Permits, Funding and Overlapping Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

(a) **Permits:** none required

(b) **Funding:** Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, \$63,225.00  
The funding source is the FAS acquisition account. Price is based upon appraised value.

- (c) **Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**  
none

**9. Summary of the proposed action:**

Tract 1 – Donation

Tract 1 is located approximately 8 miles northwest of Missoula on the western side of the Clark Fork River. The owner wishes to donate the property to FWP as it provides little benefit to their farming operation due to its topography and location.

The acres are transected by the Big Flat Road that serves as the access road on the west side of the river. The topography of this tract has a slope of between thirty and sixty percent, with the exception of the river rock shoreline. Excluding the shoreline, most of the tract is heavily forested with fir and pine trees.

Although there is no parking area along Big Flat Road for accessing the property, the public can park at the Deep Creek FAS and walk along the river's shoreline to use the property for bank fishing.

Tract 2 – Purchase in Fee

This property, referred to as Old Harper's Bridge, is northwest of Missoula off of Mullan Road - Hwy 263 on Harper's Bridge Road. The proposed acreage to be acquired by FWP is next to the remaining eastern abutment of the Harper's Bridge. The landscape is comprised of young and mature cottonwoods along the river's edge, mature ponderosa pines, and native grasses. There are established areas of noxious weeds (spurge and knapweed) throughout the site. The riverbank has been eroded in places due to river processes and public usage.

The current landowners have historically allowed the public to access the river through his property for bank fishing and floating. Unfortunately, the popularity of the site has grown and increased parking along the county road is causing traffic hazards and congestion problems for local residents.

The current landowner is proposing the sale of his property to FWP to ensure the public's access to the river is maintained, the natural environment of the parcel is preserved, and the property is not developed into residential lots.

For FWP interests, the location of this site is strategically located 4-5 miles downstream from the Kona Bridge Fishing Access Site and 22 miles upstream from the Petty Creek Fishing Access Site. This acquisition would improve access to this stretch of the Clark Fork River giving floaters an additional put-in and pull-out location within the 26-27 mile stretch between Kona Bridge FAS and the Petty Creek FAS. Furthermore, under the management of FWP, the site would be added to the routine regional maintenance schedule of other fishing access sites in the area. Maintenance will include treatment of the existing noxious weed infestations.

Recently, Missoula County officials have received calls from local residents complaining about the traffic caused by people accessing the river at the Old Harper's Bridge cul-de-sac. Missoula County supports the acquisition by FWP because of the possibility of the site being developed into a formal fishing access site in the future with off-street parking.

## **10. Alternatives:**

### **Alternative A: No Action**

If FWP does not acquire the property, the public would lose this opportunity to add public access to the Clark Fork River for floating and angling activities. Tract 2 has the potential for residential development. Additionally, Missoula County officials are likely to continue to receive complaints from local residents about river users parking along Harper's Bridge Road and blocking traffic.

### **Alternative B: The acquisition of approximately 12 acres adjacent to the Clark Fork River**

The acquisition of the land at Old Harper's Bridge will provide the public with additional recreational sites along the Clark Fork River that will be under the management of FWP. This acquisition will provide further open spaces and protect the viewshed along the Clark Fork River. The acquisition would provide key access to the Clark Fork River in a stretch where access is currently quite limited. If acquired, the nearest access locations would be Kona Bridge Fishing Access Site (4-5 miles upstream) and Petty Creek Fishing Access Site (22 miles downstream).

## **PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST**

The analysis of the physical and human environments discussed on the following pages is limited to Alternative B. The reason for this is because the potential impacts of Alternative A are difficult to define since the final decision of what becomes of the properties is left to the discretion of the current owner. It is possible that Tract 2 would be sold to a real estate professional for residential development, which would mean the possible closure of access to the river at the site and vegetation, soil, and wildlife disturbances or the current owner could maintain the status quo and allow recreationalists and anglers access to the river through this property. Since Tract 1 is less likely to be developed, it still could be sold for timber or kept as undeveloped.

### **3. Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.**

#### **A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?		X				
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				

The proposed acquisition will have no effect on existing soil patterns or structures.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.)		X				

The proposed easement will have no effect on ambient air quality.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

3. <b><u>WATER</u></b>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)		X				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)		X				

The proposed easement will have no effect on surface water, drainage patterns, or floodwater routes.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.



4. <b>VEGETATION</b>  Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				4c
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?		X				4e
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				

- 4c. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage Program's (MNHP) species of concern database found no vascular or non-vascular plants of significance within the boundaries of either tracts to be acquired.
- 4e. Tract 2 currently has infestations of spotted knapweed, leafy surge, and common tansy. The proposed acquisition will not lead to the expansion of noxious weeds in the area and if the acquisition were approved, FWP would initiate its regional weed management plans to control the noxious weeds from the property by chemical and biological methods.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

<b>** 5. <u>FISH/WILDLIFE</u></b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>					
	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>	<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				5f
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?		X				
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)		X				5h
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)		X				

The proposed acquisition will have no bearing on the game and non-game species that frequent the property (assessment of Kristi DuBois, FWP Wildlife Biologist). The property is not considered critical habitat for any species. 5f/h. A search of the Montana Natural Heritage database revealed no endangered species are in the vicinity of the property. However, four terrestrial species of concern have been observed nearby and it is inferred the species could have occupied the habitat at either tracts at some point. Those species are the Fisher, Western Skink, Grasshopper Sparrow and Bald Eagle.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X				
b. Exposure of people to serve or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				

This project will not increase noise or electrical level in the area.

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				

The proposed acquisitions are likely to change the current use of the area only minimally. Historically, the area is open to some waterfowl and archery hunting and hunters do have some access to some of the river bottom. FWP would likely continue to allow such activities for the present time. Additionally, the current owner has allowed grazing on the property on Tract 2. If the acquisition were approved, FWP would likely discontinue that activity by fencing out any livestock from the area.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

8. <u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X		X	8a
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)			X		X	8d

8a/d. FWP's Regional Weed Management Plan uses an integrated approach to managing noxious weeds. This includes mechanical, biological and chemical methods to limit the infestation of noxious weeds on their properties. Only a trained licensed professional would conduct weed treatment. Storage and mixing of the chemicals would be in accordance with standard operating procedures.

9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?			X			9a
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				

9a. The fee title acquisition of the tracts is designed to protect the open space and viewshed along the river corridor while providing for additional recreation river access.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

10. <b><u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u></b>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				10b
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				10c
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources		X				10e
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.			X			10f

10b. FWP will pay property taxes in an amount equal to that of a private individual.

10c. The proposed acquisition will result in no change to existing utility power line and utility easement within Tract 2.

10e. The proposed purchase will be paid by FWP's Park Division funds.

10f. The maintenance costs are anticipated to be minimal because litter and noxious weed control will be the only expenses at the site at this time. Additionally, Tract 2 is already on the caretaker route for Kona Bridge and Petty Creek FASs making visiting the site very convenient. Tract 1 will be maintained in its current state and will be inspected by FWP staff on a periodical basis to check for vandalism and garbage.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

<b>** 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u></b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>					
	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>	<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report.)		X				11c
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.)		X				

11c. The public access to the area will continue if the proposed acquisition is approved and will continue to be a destination for those wanting to float or fish the Clark Fork River and enjoy its beauty. See *Appendix D* for Tourism Report.

<b>12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</u></b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>					
	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>	<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)		N/A				

No groundbreaking activities that could disturb cultural resources are going to be initiated as part of the proposed action.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

## SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u>  Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)		X				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		X				

- 13a. The long-term protection of the open space and continuing public access to the Clark Fork River are the overriding motivations for the proposed acquisition of this property by FWP. No adverse influences to physical or human environments are anticipated if the acquisition is approved.

\* Include a narrative explanation under Part III describing the scope and level of impact. If the impact is unknown, explain why the unknown impact has not or cannot be evaluated.

\*\* Include a narrative description addressing the items identified in 12.8.604-1a (ARM).

\*\*\* Determine whether the described impact may result and respond on the checklist. Describe any minor or potentially significant impacts.

\*\*\*\* Include a discussion about the issue in the EA narrative and include documentation if it will be useful.

**2. Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

None applicable

**PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

The proposed action will have no negative cumulative effects on the physical and human environments. When considered over the long-term, this action poses significant positive effects for the public's continuing access to a scenic recreation area of the Clark Fork River.

The minor impacts that were identified in the previous section are small in scale and will not influence the overall environment of the immediate area of either Tract 1 or 2. The natural environment within Tract 1 will continue to exist to provide habitat to transient and permanent species. Tract 2 will continue to be open to the public for access to the river for bank fishing and floating activities.

The environmental analysis focuses solely on the acquisition of the properties. If FWP were to initiate the development of Tract 1, a separate environmental assessment would be completed and the public would have the ability of comment on those proposed improvements.

**PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**1. Public Involvement:**

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on this current EA, the proposed action and alternatives:

- Two public notices in each of these papers: *Helena Independent Record and Missoulian*;
- One statewide press release;
- Direct mailing to adjacent landowners and interested parties;
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov>.

Additionally, copies will be available for public review at FWP Region 2 Headquarters.

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having few minor impacts.

**2. Duration of comment period.**

The public comment period will extend for (30) thirty days following the publication of the second legal notice in area newspapers. Written comments will be accepted until **5:00 p.m. July 21, 2008** and can be mailed to the address below:

Old Harper's Bridge Acquisitions  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region 2 Headquarters  
3201 Spurgin Road  
Missoula, MT 59804

Or email comments to: [rzarling@mt.gov](mailto:rzarling@mt.gov)



## **PART V. EA PREPARATION**

1. **Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/NO)?** No

**If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.**

Based upon the above assessment, which has identified a very limited number of minor impacts from the proposed action, an EIS is not required and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of review.

2. **Persons responsible for preparing the EA:**

Lee Bastian  
Regional Parks Manager  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
3201 Spurgin Road  
Missoula, MT 59804  
406-542-5517

Rebecca Cooper  
MEPA Coordinator  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
1420 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Helena MT 59601  
406-444-4756

3. **Agencies consulted during preparation of the EA:**

Missoula County  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
    Parks Division  
    Wildlife Division  
    Legal Bureau  
    Lands Bureau  
Montana Department of Commerce – Tourism  
Montana Natural Heritage Program – Natural Resources Information System (NRIS)

## **APPENDICES**

- A. MCA 23-1-110 Qualification Checklist
- B. Tourism Report – Department of Commerce

**APPENDIX A**  
23-1-110 MCA  
PROJECT QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST

**Date:** April 16, 2008

**Person Reviewing:** Rebecca Cooper

**Project Location:** Old Harper's Bridge Acquisitions

**Description of Proposed Work:** Acquisition of approximately 12 acres adjacent to the Clark Fork River

The following checklist is intended to be a guide for determining whether a proposed development or improvement is of enough significance to fall under 23-1-110 rules. (Please check ✓ all that apply and comment as necessary.)

- [ ] A. New roadway or trail built over undisturbed land?  
Comments:
- [ ] B. New building construction (buildings <100 sf and vault latrines exempt)?  
Comments:
- [ ] C. Any excavation of 20 c.y. or greater?  
Comments:
- [ ] D. New parking lots built over undisturbed land or expansion of existing lot that increases parking capacity by 25% or more?  
Comments:
- [ ] E. Any new shoreline alteration that exceeds a doublewide boat ramp or handicapped fishing station?  
Comments:
- [ ] F. Any new construction into lakes, reservoirs, or streams?  
Comments:
- [ ] G. Any new construction in an area with National Registry quality cultural artifacts (as determined by State Historical Preservation Office)?  
Comments:
- [ ] H. Any new above ground utility lines?  
Comments: *The proposed acquisition would not interfere with the existing utility lines and easement in Tract 2.*
- [ ] I. Any increase or decrease in campsites of 25% or more of an existing number of campsites?  
Comments:

- [   ] J.    Proposed project significantly changes the existing features or use pattern;  
including effects of a series of individual projects?  
Comments:

If any of the above are checked, 23-1-110 MCA rules apply to this proposed work and should be documented on the MEPA/HB495 CHECKLIST. Refer to MEPA/HB495 Cross Reference Summary for further assistance.

## APPENDIX B

### TOURISM REPORT MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) & MCA 23-1-110

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by MCA 23-1-110 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator  
Travel Montana-Department of Commerce  
PO Box 200533  
Helena, MT 59620-0533

**Project Name:** Old Harper's Bridge Acquisition

**Project Description:** FWP proposes to purchase approximately 3 acres from a private landowner. The site is located adjacent to the Clark Fork River and is 4 miles downstream from the Kona Bridge fishing access site and 20 miles upstream from the Petty Creek fishing access site. The acquisition would allow the Department to establish a formal fishing access site to this stretch of river at a future time.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?  
NO ☒ YES If YES, briefly describe:

Acquiring this property as a future FAS is a positive move toward providing more public access to this popular area of the Clark Fork River, benefiting the area's tourism economy.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?  
NO ☒ YES If YES, briefly describe:

The project would improve the quantity of opportunities and we would assume the future FAS development would add to the quality.

Signature Victor Bjornberg, Tourism Development Coordinator Date 7-23-07